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Mandalpatti and Kote Betta in Kodagu district are enveloped in a blanket of Neelakurinji flowers, which blossom once in 12 years | DHANUSH KAVERIAPPA

JAB-O-METER

TAKE YOUR SHOT

Aug 16 **55,85,834 doses**

Aug 17 **49,48,965 doses**

TOTAL DOSES 56,00,94,581

AS ON DATE	AUG 16	AUG 17
Fresh cases	32,937	25,166
Recoveries	35,909	36,830
Deaths	417	437

KARNATAKA	AUG 16	AUG 17
Fresh cases	1,065	1,298
Recoveries	1,486	1,833
Deaths	28	32

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Say women can work, join its government but under Sharia norms • Announce amnesty for all, say won't seek revenge

TALIBAN'S MODERATE MESSAGING

Safe journey back home

Government officials welcome Indian citizens on their arrival from the crisis-hit Afghanistan by Indian Air Force's C-17 aircraft, at Jamnagar, Gujarat on Tuesday | PTI

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

IN a bid to give the impression that it has changed overnight, the dreaded Taliban militia on Tuesday declared a nationwide 'amnesty' saying it would not seek revenge on those who worked with the ousted Afghan government. "Nobody is going to harm you, nobody is going to knock on your doors," said the outfit's spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid.

In a surprise move, the Taliban said women will be allowed to work and study. It also welcomed women to join its government. The Taliban would honour women's rights, but within the norms of Islamic law, Mujahid said. The comments come amid widespread fear and confusion with desperate crowds thronging airport to escape to safer locations.

The comments marked departure from the last time the Taliban were in power, when women were largely confined to their homes. However, not many believe the militia, which is notorious for its public executions and brutality against women. Some reports said the Taliban fighters have lists of people who cooperated with the government and are seeking them out.

A day after the deadly chaos at the Kabul airport, the capital city remained quiet on Tuesday as the Taliban patrolled the streets and residents choosing to remain indoors fearing for their life.

The Taliban are expected to announce details of their government in a day or two. There are indications that the militia wants to be seen as moderate at least in the initial days by including non-Taliban leaders and women in the government.

Meanwhile, in his address to the nation, US President Joe Biden on Tuesday justified the US troops pullout. "I stand squarely behind my decision. After 20 years, I've learned the hard way there was never a good time to withdraw US forces," he said.

In another development, Amrullah Saleh, the vice president of the ousted Afghan government, tweeted on Tuesday that he is the country's 'legitimate' caretaker president, vowing that he would never surrender to the Taliban. P9,11

US agencies scrub websites to protect Afghan civilians left behind

Washington: Multiple federal agencies that operated in Afghanistan and worked with Afghan citizens have been hastily purging their websites, removing articles and photos that could endanger the Afghans who interacted with them and now fear retribution from the Taliban. The scrubbing started late last week when it became clear that the Taliban would soon take over the country

CCS takes stock of evacuation from Af

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

WITH India managing to evacuate its entire embassy staff from Kabul in what foreign minister S Jaishankar described as a "difficult and complicated exercise", the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS), the apex body on national security, met on Tuesday under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to take stock of the situation.

Two C-17 heavy-lift aircraft of the IAF flew in from Kabul with a total of 190 people, one landing in Jamnagar in Gujarat and the other at the Hindon airbase. The C-17 that landed at IAF's Hindon airbase around 5 pm, had around 150 people, including diplomats, officials, security personnel and some other stranded Indians. Besides, France evacuated 21 Indians from Kabul to Paris.

The evacuation happened only after Jaishankar called up US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, sources said.

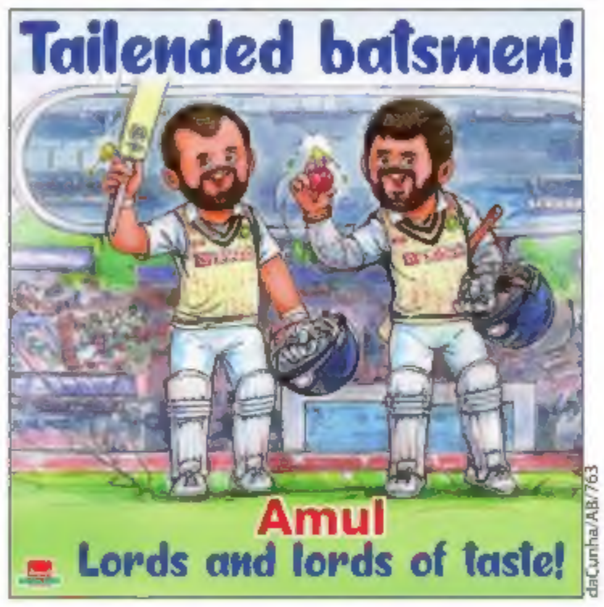
Sources also said Modi was personally monitoring the evacuation and instructed officials to make arrangements for food and security of the returning people.

At the CCS meeting, Modi directed all concerned ministries to keep a close track of the evolving situation, an official said. Those present included Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Home Minister Amit Shah, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, National Security Advisor Ajit Doval and Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla.

There were also reports of evacuated Ambassador to Afghanistan Rudrendra Tandon briefing the meeting.

India has already opened an emergency e-visa facility for Afghans and clarified that repatriation will be done irrespective of religion, the Union ministry of home affairs announced on Tuesday.

Meanwhile SOS calls kept coming in, with the Kerala government requesting help to bring back 41 Malayalis stranded in Kabul. Some messages claimed the Taliban were verifying their identity and taking away their passports and other important documents.



SC NOTICE TO CENTRE ON PEGASUS ROW

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Tuesday issued notice to the Centre on a batch of petitions seeking a court-monitored enquiry into the Pegasus spyware snooping row. The notice was issued after Solicitor General Tushar Mehta expressed his inability to file an affidavit on whether the government used the Peagsus software or not | P9

In biggest deal for Tejas, HAL inks ₹5,375-crore pact for 99 GE engines

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

IN the largest deal signed related to the Light Combat Aircraft (LCA), Tejas, HAL on Tuesday placed a ₹5,375-crore order with GE Aviation for the supply of 99 **F404-GE-IN20** engines to power the aircraft as well as for support services.

The order is considered a major milestone in the execution of HAL's contract with the Indian Air Force to deliver 83 LCAs, and will be further enhanced with the manufacturing of GE F414 engines in India for the upcoming LCA Mk-II programme.

Chris Cyr, vice-president, Business Development & Sales, GE Aviation, who interacted virtually in the contract-signing event, said GE has committed to deliver all the 99 engines and support services by 2029.

"This is the largest-ever deal and purchase order placed by HAL for LCA," said HAL Chairman and Managing Director R Madhavan.

The F404-GE-IN20 engine is the highest thrust variant of the F404 family and incorporates GE's latest hot-section material and technologies as well as full authority digital engine control (FADEC) for reliable power and outstanding operational characteristics.

CONTINUED ON: P7

RISING TAMIL NADU

100 DAYS THAT SPELL THE NAME

100 Days Achievements

I, Muthuvel Karunanidhi Stalin...

100 Days of Government of Tamil Nadu...

- Saving people from Corona pandemic
- Rs.4,000 and 14 grocery items to 2.07 crore family rice cardholders
- **Petrol price reduced by Rs.3 per litre. Aavin milk price reduced by Rs.3 per litre**
- **Free bus travel for women, differently-abled and transgenders**
- **A Multi-Speciality Hospital at a cost of Rs.250 crore in the campus of King Institute, Chennai**
- **"Kalaignar Memorial Library"** with modern facilities at a cost of Rs.70 crore in Madurai
- 49 Industrial Projects through **"Investors First Destination - Tamil Nadu"**. Rs.28,508 crore investment, 83,482 employment opportunities
- **"Health at the Doorsteps Scheme"** - First in the Country
- Appointment of Archagars from all castes
- Poojas in **"Annai Thamizh"** in Temples
- **10.5% Special Reservations for Vanniars, Seermarabinar Tribes and other MBCs**
- **"Separate Annual Budget for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare"** - First in the State
- Fixed Deposit of Rs.5 lakh and Rs.3 lakh to children who lost their parents due to Corona disease

- Journalists announced as frontline workers. Rs.10 lakh compensation to the families of those who die of Covid-19
- Financial allocation of Rs.4,508.23 crore to Free Electricity Scheme
- Re-introduction of **"Anna Marumalarchi"** and **"Namakku Naame"** Schemes
- **"Kalaignarin Anaithu Grama Orunginaintha Velaan Valarchi Thittam"** at a cost of Rs.1,245.45 crore
- Financial allocation of Rs.1,149.79 crore for the **"Welfare of Fishermen"**
- **"Kalaignar Urban Development Scheme"** at a cost of Rs.1,000 crore
- Rs.2,756 crore loan to Women Self Help Groups waived. **Rs.20,000 crore loan assistance**
- **"Thagaisal Thamizhar Award"** constituted for eminent persons who contribute to Tamil Nadu and Tamils
- **"Economic Advisory Council"** with World renowned Economists
- **"Singara Chennai 2.0"** to improve Chennai to the international standards

This is not my Government !
This is our Government !
We will work hard to earn goodwill even from our adversaries !
We will work hard ! Work hard ! Work hard !

Issued by : Director, Information and Public Relations Department

D/PR/729/DISPLAY/2021

We do what we say! We say what we do!